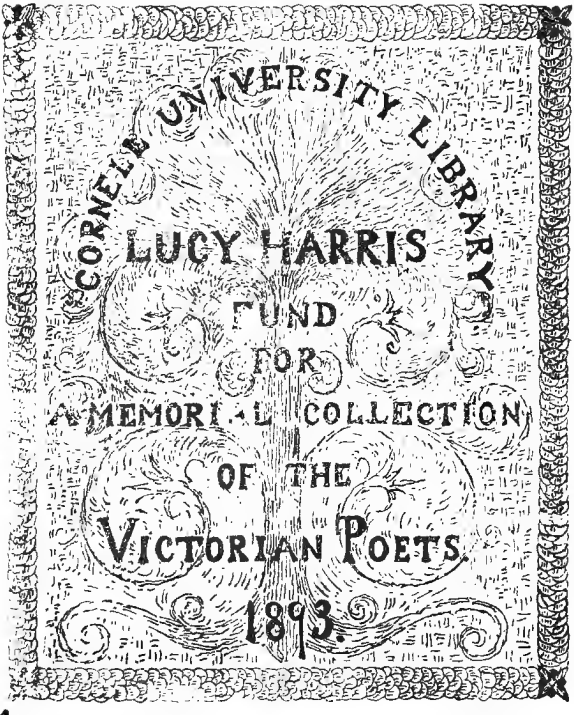
HAPPY SPRING-TIME

BY

OSCAR PLETSCH



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HAPPY SPRING-TIME

In Pictures

BY

OSCAR PLETSCH.

HAPPY SPRING-TIME

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IN PICTURES

BY

OSCAR PLETSCH.

WITH RHYMES FOR MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

BY MRS. CHARLES HEATON.

London:
MACMILLAN AND CO.
1874.

A 205321

LONDON:
R. CLAY, SONS, AND TAYLOR, PRINTERS
BREAD STREET HILL.

PREFACE.

Oscar Pletsch's delightful pictures of child-life are now so well known in England, that nothing more need be said in recommendation of this little volume than that it is illustrated by him. The verses that appeared with the German edition contained allusions that even in a translation would have been unintelligible to English children. It was therefore thought better to have fresh ones. I hope that my interpretations of the pictures will prove satisfactory to my little hearers or readers.

M. M. H.

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WASHING BABY.

BABY, baby, do not cry,
Nurse must wash and rub you dry;
Wash the little dimply face,
Wash each little creasy place,
Wash the little curly ears,
Wash away the falling tears,

Wash the soft fat neck so sweet,
Little hands and little feet.

When to bed my Baby goes,
Doggie runs off with her clothes;
Pussy puts away her frock,
Mousey carries off her sock;
And what is naughty Bunny at,
In my Baby's garden hat?
He has stuck it on one ear.
Funny Bunny, bring it here!

INFANCY.

"*Heaven lies about us in our infancy.*"—WORDSWORTH.

So near to heaven our Baby-boy,
  Who came to us last year,
That still his former playmates love
  To play with him down here.

In tender cooing tones he talks
  To angel-guests unseen
By our dim eyes, that cannot pierce
  The mists of years between.

And often when asleep he lies,
  A smile comes o'er his face,
And then we know that he hath dreams
  Of some more joyful place;

INFANCY

Of some fair world unknown to us,
But shedding still its rays
Of beauty and of innocence
O'er childhood's early days.

SPITZ'S EDUCATION.

Oh, Spitz, this really is too bad,
A dog brought up like you!
Do you forget already, Sir,
All you've been taught to do?

Now look at me, and pray attend;
Give me your right hand paw.
No! that is not the right one, Spitz;
I've told you that before.

When I say "Trust," you know, dear Spitz,
Your honour is concerned:
You would not gobble up the cake
Because my back was turned.

R.GUNTHER sc.

And you must learn to balance things
Upon your shiny nose;
And, Spitz, be careful when you walk,
To well turn out your toes.

Some day I'll teach you, Spitz, to walk
Upon two legs like me;
But then, old Spitz, you must behave
With more gentility.

Your paw again—you shocking dog!
With all the pains I've taken,
To find in left and right paw still
You always are mistaken.

THE ORGAN BOY.

WHERE the orange sheds its bloom,
And the myrtle its perfume;
Where the red pomegranate flower
Burns amidst its dark green bower;

'Neath Italia's sunny skies
He first opened his dark eyes
In a world of light and joy—
The poor homeless organ boy.

But the tide of human woes,
Ebbless tide that ever flows,

THE ORGAN BOY.

Drifted him on these cold shores,
To play the organ at our doors.

Little waif! not all forlorn,
Though from friends and country torn,
Still thy marmot loveth thee,
And kind hearts feel sympathy.

MARGARET'S GARDEN.

I HAVE a little garden,
A garden of my own,
And every day I water there
The seeds that I have sown.

I love my little garden,
And tend it with such care,
You will not find a faded leaf
Or blighted blossom there.

Sweet mignonette and larkspur,
Blue lupin and sweet peas,
White rocket and escholtzia,—
I've some of all of these.

MARGARET'S GARDEN.

And in the very middle
A fair white lily grows,
And by its side, contrasting well,
A beautiful red rose.

Pale primroses and violets
May also there be found
It is the gayest little plot
In all the garden round.

But still I think that there is room
For one more flower as well:
Pray, Mr. Gardener, have you got
A Canterbury bell?

LITTLE MAY.

Five years old our little May,
Five years old her last birthday.
She can sing, and she can play.
Clever little May.

She can knit and she can sew,
She can read and write also:
Many things our May can do.
Useful little May.

May is neither dark nor fair;
Chestnut brown her plaited hair;
Tinged her skin by sun and air.
Healthy little May.

LITTLE MAY.

Thoughtful eyes of softest hue,
You scarce can tell if grey or blue,
But you feel those eyes are true.
Honest little May.

Two sweet dimples when she smiles,
When from you, with artful wiles,
Some new story she beguiles.
Coaxing little May.

She has such a winning grace,
In your heart she steals a place;
Very sweet her simple face.
Darling little May.

Little things delight her still,
Little joys her measure fill,
Little knows she yet of ill.
Happy little May.

OUR BABY-BOY.

Who can that little boy be on the floor?
I think I remember him somewhere before.

Ten little fingers and ten little toes,
Two round eyes and a little snub nose,
Two dimpled cheeks so fat and so red,
And a big paper cap on the top of his head;
Two curly ears like shells on each side,
A round little chin and mouth open wide;
Four little teeth just able to bite,
Two rosy lips one could kiss day and night;

OUR BABY-BOY.

Two sturdy legs just beginning to walk,
A sweet sauey tongue just beginning to talk.
Oh! who can he be? I wish I could tell;
He looks as though he knew me very well.

Why, it's our little Baby, I really declare!
No greater rascal you'll find anywhere.
Come, kiss me, my baby, and let me kiss you;
That's the best thing for a baby to do.

LITTLE BROOK.

WHERE are you running so fast, little Brook,
Over the stones so grey?
Stop for a moment, I prithee, dear Brook,
Just for a moment, and play.

You chatter away as you flow, little Brook,
But speak to me never a word,
Though often I whisper to you, little Brook,
Sweet secrets by others unheard.

Oh! what do you say to the birds, little Brook,
That fly to your bosom to drink?
Oh! what do you say to the flowers, dear Brook,
That cluster so close to your brink?

LITTLE BROOK.

And what do you say to yourself, little Brook,
As you ripple in music along?
The while that I fill my pitcher, dear Brook,
Please, tell me the words of your song.

You are hasting away to the sea, dear Brook,
To the great unfathomèd sea;
You may not delay for a moment, dear Brook:
Is that what you whisper to me?

Ah! then your life is like ours, little Brook!
Ever hurrying, hurrying on,
Till the waves of an unknown sea, little Brook,
We reach some day, and are gone.

PUSSY, DEAR PUSSY.

Pussy, dear Pussy, I've made up your bed,
And here is a pillow to rest your poor head,
A nightcap I'll fetch to tie over your ears:
How funny you'll feel when a mousey appears.

You lie there by Dolly, just blinking your eyes,
Looking, old Pussy, so solemnly wise,
As though you knew ever so much more than
she;
Yet, what you are thinking, you never tell me.

Pray, are you the Pussy-cat, loyal and bold,
Who made that so famous long journey of old?
That ever illustrious Pussy, I mean,
Who went up to London to visit the Queen.

PUSSY, DEAR PUSSY.

Or, are you the cat of the Nursery rhyme,
Who played on the fiddle-strings, once on a time?
The same, I believe, who ran right up a tree,
While someone stood counting out one, two and three.

No, Pussy, I've known you since you were a kitten;
Your life, I feel sure, Ma'am, has yet to be written—
Perhaps by myself, when I know how to write;
But now, Pussy dear, I must bid you good-night.

MARGARET'S MUSIC.

Margaret (*meditating as she counts* 1, 2, 3).

Three crotchets in a bar,
Steady notes those crotchets are;
Six quavers somewhat quicker,
Semi-quavers coming thicker,
Demi-semi-quavers too,
Then a minim counting two.

Charlie.

If you don't cease that hum, strum, thrum,
I'll tell you what! I'll get my drum
And thump upon it one, two, three,
Just in the way that you serve me,
Then we will see who makes most noise,
Affected girls or 'horrid boys.'

MARGARET'S MUSIC.

Papa (*in the next room, thin partition*).

Orpheus with music lulled to rest
The passions of the human breast.
But I don't know! whene'er I hear
Such music as now greets my ear,
I feel my temper rising fast,
And patience gets worn out at last.
I cannot stand it any more. (*Aloud.*)
Pray, stop that wretched din, before—
Before you drive me down-right mad.

Mamma. Another father would be glad
To hear the progress Margaret's made
This last half-year.

Papa. For which I've paid.

Mamma.

The darling child! She now can play
Three tunes!

Papa. She's playing them all day.

Mamma.

And yet you grudge five pounds a quarter,
For music for your little daughter.

SUMMER-TIME.

The snow on the mountains
Is melting away;
The woodlands and valleys
With blossoms are gay.

The song-birds are singing
A melody sweet;
All things are rejoicing
The summer to greet.

The bees' pleasant murmur
Pervades the warm air;
The chirp of the cricket
Is heard everywhere.

SUMMER-TIME.

The breath of the meadow
  Is fragrant with hay;
The cow is enjoying
  Her rest at noonday;

And voices of children
  O'erflowing with mirth,
Fill up the glad chorus
  That rises from earth.

The whole world is teeming
  With summer delight;
The days are so long now,
  There's no time for night.

FIRST LOVE.

When you could scarce toddle,
And I could just walk,
Before even you, dear.
Attempted to talk.

Then you were my sweetheart:
And I have been true
From that day to this, dear;
But how about you?

I gave you a doll, once,
Upon your birthday:
You poked out its eyes,
And then cast it away.

FIRST LOVE.

Would you serve me the same, dear,
I wonder, if I
Gave my heart to your keeping?
I only can try.

'T would not be so cruel,
Though blind I should be,
As for my little sweetheart
To cease to love me.

So if, my sweet Molly,
You mean to say Nay,
You may poke out my eyes
Ere you cast me away.

THE ARMY'S RETURN.

Tramp of feet
Down the street,
March and march along;
Beat of drum,
Here they come,
With victorious song.

Wave the flag,
Honour's rag
In the field unfurled,
Midst the strife,
Life for life,
Of a furious world.

Children all,
Soldiers small,
Like young heroes play;

RETURN OF THE ARMY.

Shoulder gun,
And in fun
Gaily march away.

All forgot
Is his lot,
Who went with hopes so high:
Heart so bold
Lying cold,
'Neath a pitiless sky.

But alone
Making moan,
A sad heart indoors
Scarcely hears
For her tears,
Of these glorious wars.

LADY TABBYSKIN'S BALL.

Lady Tabbyskin gave a large party last night,
While we were asleep in our beds;
The Pussycats danced in the clear moonlight,
All over the tiles and the leads.

Sir Grimalkin the fierce, just home from the wars,
And Mademoiselle Minette from France
(You'd never suspect such a darling had claws)
Led off in the first country-dance.

Sweet Blanchette was there, blue eyes and white hair,
The Belle of the country all round;
But so deaf that, though all were miouing for her,
She never could hear the least sound.

LADY TABBYSKIN'S BALL.

Black Tom gazed and sighed as if deeply in love;
He looked somewhat anxious and pale;
But just as he hoped the fair creature to move
Slyboots gave a tug at his tail.

Miss Tortoiseshell sang a most beautiful song,
Though I could not quite make out the words,
But the pith of the ditty, unless I heard wrong,
Was tender young mice and sweet birds.

Then all joined in chorus, Oh dear! Oh dear!
It woke me from out of my sleep;
Such music it never befel me to hear!
I ran to the window to peep:

And there I beheld the sweet picture you see,
Of the big Pussy-cats, and the small,
As they danced, and they sang, on the roofs in high glee,
At the great Lady Tabbyskin's ball.

OFF TO THE WAR.

Come, saddle and bridle my gallant roan steed;
Give him a mouthful of hay.
Sweet ostler, I hope he has had a good feed
Of beans and oats to-day.

Now give him his head. Goodbye, my love;
My groom jumps up behind,
Then off we go at a galloping pace,
Outstripping far the wind.

Away, away, over hill and plain,
A rider bold am I;
You cannot throw me off, old horse,
However much you try.

OFF TO THE WAR.

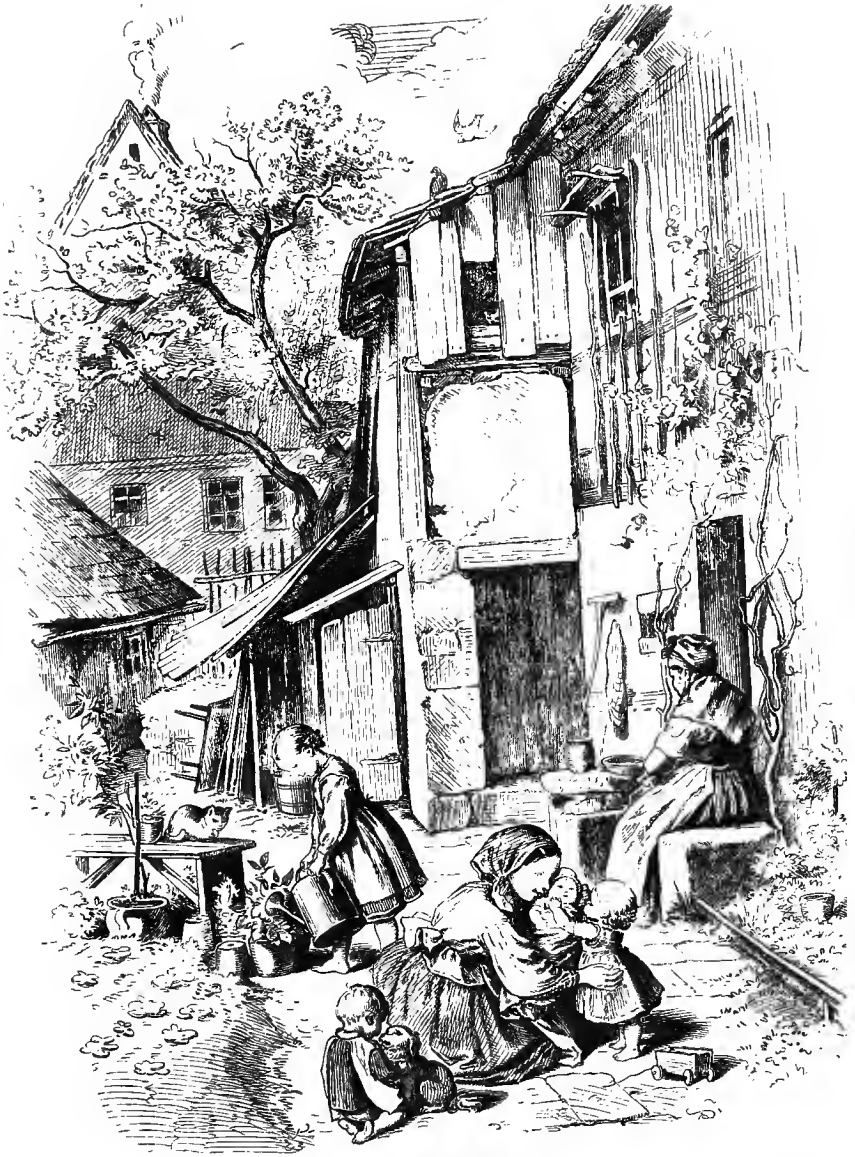
Away, away, we still gallop on;
I hear the cannon's roar;
My good broad sword I brandish high.
We're off unto the war.

GOOD MORNING.

Good morning, shines the sun
In at our window pane ;
The day's work has begun,
And life awakes again.

Good morning, blows the breeze
Across the heathery lea ;
Good morning, nod the trees
To sails far out at sea.

Good morning, sings the lark,
Up in the cloudless blue,
And watchers through the dark,
With morn their hopes renew.



GOOD MORNING.

Good morning, coos the dove,
Unto its faithful mate;
Good morning to my love,
Says darling little Kate.

Good morning, little maiden,
May thy days ever be
With happiness full laden,
No ill come nigh to thee.

THE FALL.

What! fallen down again, my pet,
And made your forehead bleed?
Mamma has kissed the place, you say,
Yet something more you need!

Perhaps an orange would do good,
Cut into slices thin;
Or else a nice ripe pear, might ease
The pain that you are in.

I've known a fig to cure a smart,
When carefully applied,
Not to the wounded place itself,
But to the mouth—inside.

THE FALL.

Once, I remember, cocoa-nut
  Acted with magic power;
And dried up tears that fast had flowed
  For nearly half an hour.

And chocolate has virtue great,
  For scratches, cuts, and bruises,—
But toffee is the remedy
  That little Mary chooses.

A VILLAGE MAID WAS I.

In a far-off foreign land,
In a city big and grand,
Amidst pomp and show I live;
But, ah me! what would I give,
The simple maid
To be once more,
Who played before our cottage door.

Sometimes in the ball-room's crowd,
When my beauty's praised aloud,
Sometimes when I sit alone,
Thinking of the time that's gone,
I see again
A peasant child,
Running barefoot o'er the wild;

A VILLAGE MAID WAS I.

Picking flowers in the dell,
Drawing water at the well;
Careless, happy, full of glee,
Laughing, talking merrily:
An artless girl,
Unconscious yet
Of anything she would forget.

Wearily on pleasure's stream
I pause a moment then, and dream
Of that sweet time of trustful youth
Ere I learnt the world's untruth.
And oft a tear
Comes in mine eye,
To think that village maid was I.

THE OLD MILL.

In twilight's dim and mystic hour,
When pales the day's broad light,
The glow of memory oft reveals
Scenes long since passed from sight.

I see once more the dear old mill,
Where we were wont to play
In childhood's happy summer days,
Before the blue turned grey.

I hear again the mill-wheel's splash,
The pigeons' cooing note,
The ripple of the little stream
That bore my paper boat.

THE OLD MILL.

I see the gables of the roof,
  The latticed windows small,
The overhanging eaves that made
  Fantastic shadows fall.

I see myself a merry boy
  That feigned to be a sack,
And oft was carried to the mill,
  On sturdy Nanny's back.

I see you, dear, a blue-eyed girl,
  With flowing golden hair
(I fancy I have still a curl
  Out of Time's reach, somewhere).

And sitting in life's eventide
  With you at close of day,
It does not seem so long ago
  Since those days passed away.

LITTLE DAISY.

LIKE a daisy in the grass
Grows our bonnie little lass;
Just a daisy, and no more,
Springing up before our door.

But the earth would seem less fair
If the daisies grew not there;
And our lives would lose a grace,
Should we miss that daisy face.

LITTLE DAISY.

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